

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-18. (Canceled)

19. (New) An integrated breathing assistance apparatus for use as part of a system for providing respiratory gases to a user, comprising:

a gases delivery device adapted to provide respiratory gases at a substantially positive mean pressure through an outlet,

a heater plate, adapted to receive a water chamber and heat the contents of said chamber in use, said gases delivery device and said heater plate rigidly connected together,

a controller adapted to energise said integrated breathing assistance apparatus to at least two configurations, a first configuration where said gases delivery device is operable to provide respiratory gases at a substantially positive mean pressure through said outlet and said heater plate is non-operable, and a second configuration where said gases delivery device is operable to provide respiratory gases at a substantially positive mean pressure through said outlet, and said heater plate is also operable,

said controller configuring said apparatus into said second configuration when an activation tool is engaged with the apparatus,

said controller configuring said apparatus to said first configuration when said activation tool is absent.

20. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 19 wherein said apparatus includes said activation tool and said apparatus further includes a communication port,

said activation tool being a software key, in use a user communicating said software

key to said controller via said communication port so that said controller configures said apparatus into said second configuration.

21. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 19 wherein said apparatus further includes a shroud, said shroud adapted to cover said heater plate and lock to said apparatus, a user unlocking said shroud using a mechanical key and removing said shroud from said apparatus when a user wishes to use said apparatus in said second configuration.

22. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 21 wherein said apparatus includes hall effect sensors in communication with said controller, and said activation tool is a magnetic key having magnets arranged in a predetermined pattern, said hall effect sensors arranged so as to detect said magnets when said key is engaged with said apparatus, in use a user engaging said activation tool with said apparatus so that said controller configures said apparatus into said second configuration.

23. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 21 wherein said apparatus includes a communication port, and said activation tool is a dongle containing an electronic circuit, said electronic circuit and said controller mutually adapted to communicate with one another when said dongle is engaged with said apparatus via said communication port, said electronic circuit providing a predetermined response to interrogation by said controller, in use a user engaging said dongle with said communication port so that said controller configures said apparatus into said second configuration upon receipt of said predetermined response.

24. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 21 wherein said heater plate is repeatedly removable and replaceable from said apparatus, said heater plate being adapted to integrate with said apparatus once said shroud is removed, integration of said removable heater plate with said apparatus enabling said controller so that said controller configures said apparatus into said second configuration.
25. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 21 wherein said apparatus includes a user-operable key pad in communication with said controller, said activation tool being a PIN, said controller configuring said apparatus into said second configuration when a use enters a PIN via said key pad.
26. (New) An apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 21 to 25 wherein said apparatus is adapted to connect to a conduit, said conduit providing said gases to a user, said conduit having a conduit heater,
said conduit heater being inoperable in said first and second configurations,
said apparatus being configurable to a third configuration wherein said gases delivery device is operable and said heater plate is operable and said conduit heater is operable,
said controller configuring said apparatus to said third configuration when one of said activation tool and a second activation tool is engaged with the apparatus.
27. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 26 wherein said apparatus further includes a user-operable key pad in communication with said controller, said second activation tool being a conduit heater PIN, said controller configuring said apparatus into said third configuration when a user enters said conduit heater PIN via said key pad.

28. (New) An integrated breathing assistance apparatus for use as part of a system for providing respiratory gases to a user, comprising:

a gases delivery device for providing gases at a predetermined pressure level,
a heater plate adapted to receive a water chamber and heat the contents of said chamber in use, said gases delivery device and said heater plate rigidly connected together,
a controller configured to energise said heater according to at least a user selectable level,

a removable cover configured to prevent user selection of said user selectable level and provide an outlet from said gas delivery device, wherein

when said cover is installed, said apparatus is adapted to deliver un-humidified gases via said outlet at a predetermined pressure level, and

when said cover is removed and at least a humidification chamber containing water is installed in proximity to said heater, said chamber having a chamber inlet and a chamber outlet, said chamber inlet being configured to receive gases from said gas delivery device, said apparatus is adapted to deliver humidified gases via the chamber outlet.

29. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 28 wherein said cover is adapted to lock to said apparatus, a user unlocking the cover using a mechanical key to remove the cover from said apparatus.

30. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 29 further comprising a control input configured to provide user selection of said user selectable level to said controller.

31. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 30 wherein said control input may be locked to prevent user selection of said user selectable level and unlocked to allow user selection of said user selectable level, said control input being unlocked by engaging a control input mechanical key with said apparatus.

32. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 28 wherein said heater plate is repeatedly removable and replaceable from said apparatus, said heater plate being adapted to integrate with said apparatus once said cover is removed.

33. (New) An apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 28 to 32 wherein the chamber outlet is adapted to be connected to a conduit, the conduit providing said gases to a user, the conduit having a conduit heater for heating the gases in the conduit,

the controller being configured to energise said conduit heater according to at least a user selectable conduit heating level,

the apparatus having a conduit heater control input configured to provide user selection of said conduit heating level.

34. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 33 wherein said conduit heater control input may be locked to prevent user selection of said conduit heating level and unlocked to allow user selection of said conduit heating level, said conduit heater control input being unlocked by engaging a conduit heater control input mechanical key with said apparatus.

35. (New) A method of controlling an apparatus for delivering respiratory gases to a patient comprising the steps of:

energising a gases delivery device to provide gases at a positive mean pressure;

configuring the apparatus to energise a humidifier based on the presence of an activation tool, said humidifier being adapted to or adaptable to humidify said gases to a humidification level,

providing the respiratory gases un-humidified at a positive mean pressure with the absence of the activation tool, and

providing the respiratory gases at a positive mean pressure humidified to the humidification level with the engagement of the activation tool with the apparatus.